

2010-2011 Georgia's Pre-K Grant Requirement Checklist Definitions and Clarifications

Refer to these definitions and clarifications as you complete the Grant Requirement Checklist. Checklist items are listed by section in the order they appear.

Section #1 – Staff and Training Documentation

Item One:

All Lead Teachers working in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms must complete the required annual training, including additional staff in Montessori classrooms and inclusion classrooms. Bright from the Start sponsored training is provided free of charge. Refer to the Bright from the Start Professional Development Training Schedule 2010-2011 found on the Bright from the Start website for details on training. Training confirmation along with certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site. *Operating Guidelines Appendix R should be used in the event cancellation of training attendance is necessary. (Operating Guidelines Section 15.2; 15.3; 15.4; 15.5)*

Item Two:

All Assistant Teachers working in Georgia's Pre-K classrooms must complete the required annual training, including additional staff in Montessori classrooms and inclusion classrooms. The Assistant Teacher Training Plan Form (*Operating Guidelines, Appendix S*) must be completed and faxed or e-mailed to Pre-K consultant for approval within 20 business days of the start of school. This year all Returning Assistant Teachers must complete one online learning module, 3 podcasts and 9 additional hours of local training relevant to Pre-K. Refer to the Bright from the Start Professional Development Training Schedule 2010-2011 found on the Bright from the Start website for details on training. The consultant-approved Assistant Teacher Training Plan along with completion of all courses must be kept on file at the Pre-K site. Training confirmations for New Assistant Teachers along with certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site. *Please refer to Appendix S in Operating Guidelines for the Assistant Teacher Training Plan. Operating Guidelines Appendix R should be used in the event cancellation of training attendance is necessary. (Operating Guidelines Section 15.2; 15.3; 15.4; 15.5)*

Item Three:

To maintain quality standards, annual training is required for Project Directors. Bright from the Start consultants shall verify documentation of training attendance. Failure of providers and their staff to participate in required training during the school year shall place their program in noncompliance and may jeopardize future funding. Training schedules are available to download from the Bright from the Start website (www.decal.ga.gov). Certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site. *Operating Guidelines Appendix R should be used in the event cancellation of training attendance is necessary. (Operating Guidelines Section 15.2; 15.3; 15.4; 15.5)*

Item Four:

Annual training is required for Site Directors. Bright from the Start consultants shall verify documentation of training attendance. Refer to the Bright from the Start Professional Development Training Schedule 2010-2011 found on the Bright from the Start website for details on training. Certificates to document attendance and completion of training must be kept on file at the Pre-K site. *Operating Guidelines Appendix R should be used in the event cancellation of training attendance is necessary. (Operating Guidelines Section 15.2; 15.3; 15.4; 15.5)*

Item Five:

All Pre-K Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers are required to enroll in the Professional Development Registry (PDR) by January 1, 2011. The Professional Development Registry can be found at <https://pdr.decal.ga.gov/>. (*Operating Guidelines Section 15.1*)

Item Six:

Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, the minimum education requirement for a Georgia's Pre-K Lead Teacher will be a Bachelor in Early Childhood Education or related field. However, Lead Teachers who were approved in the 2009-2010 school year with an approved ECE Associate Degree credential will be considered approved as long as they continue employment as a Pre-K Lead Teacher with the same company. If a Pre-K Lead Teacher holding an Associate Degree credential leaves the current program in which she/he is approved, she/he will be required to meet the minimum Bachelor Degree requirement in any new classroom. If the program currently approved to have an Associate Degree credentialed teacher replaces that teacher, the minimum education requirement of a Bachelor Degree or higher credential will apply.

Assistant Teachers are required to hold a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or higher.

Programs must submit a *Teacher Notification Form (Operating Guidelines, Appendix O)* to Bright from the Start when the status of a Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher changes. A copy of any submitted Teacher Notification Form should be kept on file at the Pre-K site. This form must be completed each time a new Lead Teacher or Assistant Teacher is hired for a Georgia's Pre-K classroom or when a Lead Teacher's or Assistant Teacher's credential level changes. Failure to report a change in Lead Teacher within the month of the change may result in the program being placed on probation. (*Operating Guidelines Section 11.3; 12.3; 13.3; 18.7; 21.1*)

Item Seven:

An on-site Pre-K orientation for all teaching and administrative staff shall be provided within the first 20 working days of commencement of Pre-K services to children. Orientation should be provided as part of the hiring process in the event of hiring new staff. Documentation of original staff orientation and new hire orientation must be kept on site for review. Documentation can include an agenda, minutes from the meeting, or a sign-in sheet. See *Operating Guidelines Appendix K – Suggested Topics for Pre-K Staff Orientation*. (*Operating Guidelines Section 6.3*)

Section #2 – Required Documentation

Item One:

Each family must receive an orientation to the Pre-K Program. Those families who cannot attend the scheduled orientation(s) should be contacted to schedule individual family orientations. A copy of all information given to parents must be kept on site for review. Documentation of orientation can include an agenda or minutes of the meeting. A sign-in sheet with parent's signature will be on site for review. All families who enter the program late and throughout the year will receive orientation and orientation materials, and the program will obtain signatures of parents on orientation sign-in sheets. See *Operating Guidelines Appendix J – Suggested Topics to Discuss at Parent Orientation*. (*Operating Guidelines Section 6.3; 8.4*)

Item Three:

Private providers must submit a reconciliation report by August 31, 2011, for the 2010-2011 school year. Local school systems must submit a reconciliation report by September 29, 2011, for the 2010-2011 school year. Providers should submit reconciliation reports electronically via PANDA. New Providers will not have an End of Year Reconciliation Report due for this current school year. See *Appendix P – Pre-K Year End Reconciliation Report*. (*Operating Guidelines Section 20.1*)

Item Four:

Roster data is critical and must reflect accurate information for both students and teachers. Roster information is subject to audit and must be substantiated by enrollment and attendance records for students and documentation of credentials for teachers. Programs are responsible for timely submission of six rosters annually. (*Operating Guidelines Section 18.7; 22.2*)

Item Five:

A child remains on your reported Wait List only after you confirm they are not enrolled in an alternate Georgia's Pre-K Program. It is necessary for programs to contact each family to inquire of the status of the child before roster submission. If it is found the child is enrolled in a Georgia's Pre-K Program you will remove them from your reported Wait List. It is necessary that parent contact be made before each reported Wait List submission. A Waiting List Information Form for each child reported on the waiting list must be kept on site for review. *Please refer to Operating Guidelines Appendix C –Waiting List Information Form. (Operating Guidelines Section 3.7)*

Item Six:

Programs should ensure student records are maintained and updated throughout the year. A process for tracking and collecting expiring Immunization/Eye, Ear, Dental Forms, and changes to Category One/Two status will ensure all forms are kept current. The Pre-K Checklist for Student Files and supporting documentation must be kept at each site for review. (The Pre-K Checklist for Student Files is located on the Bright from the Start website under Provider Section/Grant Agreement Checklist.)

Item Seven:

Eligibility documentation for children includes Georgia's Pre-K Registration Form, age documentation, proof of residency (utility bill, lease agreement) and, if applicable, the five-year-old child Parent Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A).

Proof of age eligibility and residency must be on file the day the child begins the Pre-K Program. Children must be four years of age on September 1, 2010, based upon acceptable documentation such as birth certificate, passport, official medical documentation, legal documents, or official documents from other countries. Only children whose birthdates are from September 2, 2005, through September 1, 2006, are eligible for participation for the 2010-2011 school year. (*Operating Guidelines Section 2.1; 2.2*)

The child must be a Georgia resident. For purposes of this program, Georgia resident is defined as a child who resides in the state of Georgia. **Proof of residency should be part of a child's on-site file prior to or on the first day of Pre-K.** (*Operating Guidelines Section 2.2*)

All children enrolled must have a current Certificate of Immunization (Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231) in their file for review within 30 calendar days of entrance into Georgia's Pre-K Program. Form 3231 must have either a date of expiration or "school attendance" block checked. Children who attend Georgia's Pre-K must be up to date on all immunizations required for school entry plus Haemophilus influenza type B (Hib) vaccine. Children who do not provide a completed 3231 after the 30-day period may not return to the program until the certificate is provided. Expired 3231 certificates must be updated and on site within 30 calendar days of the expiration date. Children who do not provide an updated 3231 within 30 days of expiration must be asked not to return to the program until a current 3231 form is provided with a new expiration date. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.11*)

All children enrolled must have a Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examinations (Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300) in their file for review within 90 calendar days of entrance into Georgia's Pre-K Program. After 90 days, if a child does not have all three sections of the 3300 completed, the child may not return

to the program until the completed 3300 form is provided. A family who provides an appointment card to have the 3300 form completed may remain in the program. A current 3300 form will be expected to be on site the day after the appointment. Pre-K Providers shall provide evidence of documentation of follow-ups on “untestable” or Provisional status of 3300. If a box is marked Needs Further Professional Attention, it is expected that the Pre-K site shall have documentation of the follow-up that is occurring (doctor’s notes, scheduled appointments, information from parents) on file for consultant review. When children enter the program later in the year, the Pre-K provider shall make every effort to obtain form 3300 as soon as possible to identify any follow-up needed. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.11*)

Each child’s file will contain a completed and signed Georgia’s Pre-K Registration Form (available at www.dec.ga.gov). This form must be on site upon a child’s first day of attendance. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.5*)

A Roster Information Form (*Operating Guidelines Appendix D*) must be completed, signed and kept on site for review for each child. This form should be collected after a child’s entry into the Pre-K program and prior to Roster One. Should a student be identified as Category One, the provider will request and maintain copies of documentation in student’s file. (*Operating Guidelines Section 2.4; 2.5; 3.8; 8.5*)

Section #3 – Attendance, Suspension and Disenrollment

Item One:

All attendance documentation must be maintained on site and monitored by directors to ensure students are attending according to the Operating Guidelines. Documentation must be accessible for review with times noted when children arrive late or leave before the end of the instructional day. (*Operating Guidelines Section 2.3*)

Item Two:

Children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early should be referred to the Pre-K Project Director and/or Site Director. Providers are required to document efforts to assist parents/guardians in improving absenteeism or tardiness. Inability to resolve the problem after documented interventions should be referred in writing to Bright from the Start for assistance/guidance using the Chronic Absenteeism or Tardiness Report (*Operating Guidelines Appendix F*) for disenrollment consideration. All copies of this documentation must be maintained on site for review. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.10*)

Item Three:

Immediate suspension for up to two days and a maximum of three times can be made at any time the Pre-K provider determines a child is causing harm to himself/herself or others. Bright from the Start prior approval is not needed for an immediate suspension; however, Bright from the Start must be notified in writing that such action has been taken immediately upon suspension. Programs should use the Suspension Notification Form (*Operating Guidelines Appendix E*) for immediate suspension. An extended suspension (more than two days or more than three incidents of immediate suspension) requires prior approval from Bright from the Start. Contact your Pre-K consultant to discuss the process for requesting extended suspension. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.9*)

Item Four:

Once a child has been enrolled, he/she cannot be disenrolled from the Pre-K program. Disenrollment requires prior approval from Bright from the Start, and if a student is disenrolled without prior approval the program will be automatically placed on probation. (*Operating Guidelines Section 3.9*)

Item Five:

Children who attend Pre-K will transition into Kindergarten the following year. Bright from the Start will review requests for children to repeat Pre-K on a case-by-case basis. All requests must be received by Bright from the

Start by May 1, 2011. For example of documentation and the submission process, refer to *Operating Guidelines Section 2.0*.

Section #4 – Instruction and Environment

Item One:

Programs should create and implement a plan reflecting person(s) responsible for lesson plan checks using the Instructional Quality Guide for Planning Instruction (*Operating Guideline Appendix W*). Proofed lesson plans and feedback must be kept on site for consultant review. Lesson plans and posted schedule will reflect the same clock times for planned activities.

Current lesson plans are complete and on site and are implemented: Lesson plans must be current, on site and complete for the entire week. Teachers should be planning ahead of time using what they know about the interests and needs of the children and incorporating connections with the topic of study. Daily planning or incomplete lesson plans do not meet this expectation. Lesson plans for all of the current school year must be kept on site and be accessible and organized for review. Bright from the Start has approved five lesson plan templates that meet criteria for Georgia's Pre-K instructional program. Teachers are required to use one of these approved lesson plan formats which can be found on the Bright from the Start website (www.decal.ga.gov under Teacher Section/Planning).

Lesson plans and classroom activities reflect appropriate instructional practices: The teacher has concrete plans to introduce subject matter and sequence children's learning. Instruction guides the class toward meeting defined standards, but teachers remain open to pursuing related topics that arise and capture children's interests. Instruction does not include worksheets/dittos, letter of the week, teaching letters in isolation, rote memorization/drills or introduction of skills above the developmental or age-appropriate level of the children enrolled.

Instruction is based on the Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards: There must be evidence in lesson plans that teachers are using the Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards to plan their instructional activities. Content Standards and the indicator should be linked with each instructional activity included in the lesson plans (example: LD1a). Lesson plan formats that include pre-printed Content Standards for the majority of instructional activities will not meet this expectation. Teachers should know the subject matter covered in their program curriculum and Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards. Over a period of one week, lesson plans should include activities to address skills in each of the seven domains covered in the Content Standards.

Instruction is modified to meet varying readiness levels, learning preferences and interests of children: It must be evident in lesson plans that activities have been planned that are open ended, hands-on and active. There must also be evidence that teachers have planned instructional activities based on the children's interests (losing a tooth, sports event, family vacation, birth of sibling) or initiative. Teachers should be aware of young children's learning styles, abilities and skill levels, gender-specific learning styles and preferences, and multiple intelligences in regard to four-year-old children. Classroom teaching should blend whole-class, small group and individual instruction.

Instructional activities are planned to build upon children's participation in field trips or other special experiences: It must be evident in lesson plans that there are pre-and post-activities and changes to the learning areas relating to field trips, special visitors or other special experiences. Changes to the learning environment should be made and documented as follow-up to field trips, special visitors or other special experiences (adding pizza-making materials, aprons, cash register and menus to the dramatic play area after visiting a pizza parlor). Special visitors might include community workers or parents discussing hobbies or careers. Other special

experiences might include participating in drama or musical performances. Changes do not need to occur in every learning area, but they do need to be made where applicable. It is required for special experiences, special visitors and/or field trips to take place throughout the school year. If field trips cannot be taken, then special visitors and other special experiences should take their place.

Activities for small group instruction are developmentally appropriate and purposeful: Small groups have been defined as two to eight children. The length of a small group activity should vary with the age, interests and attention span of the children. Small groups should be formed and will change frequently based on the developmental needs and skills of children. The Georgia's Pre-K Content Standards should be used in planning small group instruction. Teachers should plan activities based on what they know or need to know about the children in their class. The activities planned for small groups of students working independently should also be purposeful and Content Standards documented. Small group instruction should not include patterned art projects. (*Operating Guidelines Section 4.5*)

Item Two:

It is required that two adults be in the classroom during the 6.5 hour instructional day. The 6.5 hours of instructional time shall begin no earlier than 7:30 a.m. with hours of operation as delineated in the original approved application. The remaining 1.5 hours of the Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher's eight hour day should be used for Pre-K program activities such as parent conferences, instructional planning, etc. Using Pre-K staff during the eight hour Pre-K day to supervise children not enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K Program is unacceptable. Using Pre-K staff paid by the Pre-K grant (during the eight hour Pre-K day) to supervise children whose parents pay private fees or for whom the provider receives subsidies is an inappropriate use of Pre-K funds. During the optional one-half to one hour scheduled rest or sleeping period, a ratio of one adult providing direct supervision to 20 children is acceptable. Rest time with reduced adult ratios cannot exceed one hour. The Pre-K provider shall ensure that a substitute lead teacher and/or substitute assistant teacher is present and working in the Pre-K classroom for each day that a Lead Teacher and/or Assistant Teacher is late, leaves early, or is absent, whether due to illness, required training or personal leave. *Please refer to Operating Guidelines Appendix V – Instructional Quality Guide for Daily Schedule. (Operating Guidelines Section 1.1; 6.1; 6.2; 6.6; 6.8)*

Should a school calendar reflecting less than the 190 day/6.5 hour instructional day/8 hour staff day as accepted by the signed Grant Agreement be proposed, a request for waiver outlining the calendar changes should be sent to the Assistant Commissioner of Pre-K for approval. (*Operating Guidelines Section 1.3.*) Programs should create a written plan for monitoring daily schedules and providing feedback throughout the year. The plan will be kept on Pre-K site for review.

Item Three:

Programs will create and implement a plan reflecting person(s) responsible for completing the Instructional Quality Guide for the Learning Environment (*Operating Guidelines Appendix U*). Copies of the completed IQ Guide for the Learning Environment and feedback will be maintained on Pre-K site for consultant review. Programs should create a written plan for monitoring the learning environment/materials and providing feedback throughout the year. The plan will be kept on Pre-K site for review.

An annual written plan for expenditure of the \$1,200 for each classroom will be maintained on Pre-K site for review. Organized receipts/records of materials purchased with the \$1,200 per classroom will be maintained for review. Purchase of playground or technology equipment requires prior approval from your Pre-K consultant and will be maintained as part of organized receipts/records. (*Operating Guidelines Section 4.9; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 17.1; 17.2; 18.2; 20.0; 20.8; 24.0*)

Item Four:

Programs will develop a written plan reflecting person(s) responsible for completing the Instructional Quality Guide for Assessment (*Operating Guidelines Appendix X and Y*) with continued monitoring of the assessment process throughout the year. *Please note programs participating in WSO (Work Sampling Online) will refer to Operating Guidelines Appendix Y when supporting classroom assessment procedures, while all other programs will use Appendix X. (Operating Guidelines Section 4.6)*

Item Five:

The listed instructional tools should be provided to teachers during Staff Orientation. It is important for teachers to understand and be ready to implement the classroom/program expectations within the first 30 days of school. It is expected that all teachers possess a copy of the Pre-K Content Standards to be used for planning classroom instruction. The Content Standards and Georgia's Pre-K and WSS Correlation Guide can be found on the Bright from the Start website. (*Operating Guidelines Section 4.5; 4.6*)

Item Six:

The equipment and play area are in good repair and free of safety hazards: Hazards might include trash, broken glass, sharp edges or large rocks. Other safety hazards can include a broken fence, ant mounds, bee/wasp nests, standing water, tripping hazards, drowning hazards or any other items that might cause harm to the children or adults on the playground. Staff should monitor to ensure that the equipment is anchored safely in the ground, all equipment and pieces are in good working order, S-hooks are entirely closed, bolts are not protruding, and there are no exposed footings.

Adequate resilient surfacing is present: To meet this expectation, six inches of acceptable resilient surfacing must be present. Acceptable resilient surfaces include hardwood fiber/mulch, pea gravel, sand, and synthetic materials such as rubber mats or tiles. Resilient surfaces should not be concrete, asphalt, grass or blacktop or be packed with dirt or rocks. Grass growing through the surfacing and exposed dirt are signs that adequate surfacing is not present.

Both teachers are actively engaged with the children: Physical development and outdoor time are considered a part of the instructional day. Teachers should be actively involved with the children while in the outdoor learning area. (Teachers should not be engaged in adult conversation or only sitting and watching children.) Teachers should create a learning environment and opportunities to extend children's learning. Teachers should be able to fully supervise the entire play area.